



U.S. Department of Justice

Ronald C. Machen Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, May 27, 2011

For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

(202) 252-6933

<http://www.justice.gov/usao/dc/news/2011/apr/news.html>

Man, Woman Sentenced to 40-Year Prison Terms For Killing Northwest Washington Couple - They Joined Another Man in Targeting Home For Burglary -

WASHINGTON - Angela Hernandez-Rivera, 23, and Peiro F. Hernandez, 24, were sentenced today to 40-year prison terms for their roles in the murders of Virginia and Michael Spevak, who were attacked while in their Northwest Washington home, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

Hernandez-Rivera and Hernandez, both of Washington, D.C., are among three defendants convicted in the November 2008 killings.

The Honorable Michael L. Rankin sentenced Hernandez-Rivera this afternoon for two counts of second degree murder while armed and a burglary charge. He sentenced Hernandez for two counts of second degree murder while armed. Both had pled guilty to the charges in 2009.

The third defendant, Jose Portillo, 23, was convicted by a jury in December 2010 of a total of 15 charges, including two counts of first degree felony murder with aggravating circumstances, armed robbery of a senior citizen, burglary, theft and weapons offenses. He was sentenced in March 2011 to a 137-year prison term.

Hernandez testified for the prosecution during Portillo's trial.

According to evidence presented at that trial, on November 20, 2008, at approximately 10:30 p.m., the three assailants entered the Spevaks' home in the 5300 block of Belt Road NW. Their intention was to burglarize the home. Hernandez-Rivera had previously been in the home, and even stayed there overnight, during visits with the couple's former foster child.

On the night of the killings, Portillo went into the house armed with a gun. He confronted Mrs. Spevak, 67, with the weapon - pointing it to her face. He also tied her up with a telephone cord prior to her being murdered. Hernandez tied Mr. Spevak, 68, with his hands

behind his back on a couch only a few feet from Mrs. Spevak. The cords used to tie up the victims came from Hernandez-Rivera, who took them from the victims' phones.

After going through the home and gathering valuables to steal, the defendants discussed the need to murder the Spevaks to avoid being caught by the police. Both victims were beaten with an asp and stabbed. They died from the beating and the stab wounds.

Hernandez-Rivera and Hernandez, who are not related, were arrested within a week of the murders. Portillo was arrested in March of 2009.

"These defendants killed a defenseless couple in order to cover up their heinous crimes," said U.S. Attorney Machen. "The robbery and brutal murder of Mr. and Mrs. Spevak, who were both known for their kindness and generosity, was senseless and left a void not only in the lives of the Spevak family members but also in the lives of countless community residents whom the Spevaks had assisted throughout the years."

In announcing the sentences, U.S. Attorney Machen and Chief Lanier commended the efforts of those who worked on the case, including MPD Detectives Anthony Greene, the lead investigator, and his partner James Wilson. They also praised the efforts of Detectives Gus Giannakoulis, Joshua Branson, and Norma Horne; Lieutenants Ozetta Posey and James Cullen; Sgt. Louie White; Officers Bruce Cooper, Alton Ellis, Kevin Kennedy, Clifton Murphy and Lori Oxenreider; Technicians James Holder, John Holder, Jay Gregory, George Klein, Charles Egan and Brenda Floyd; Fingerprint Specialist Diane Glover, and DNA Examiner Jennifer Zeffer. They also acknowledged the work of Dr. Wayne Williams of the D.C. medical examiner's office.

In addition, they cited the contributions of numerous people from the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Marcey Rinker, of the Victim Witness Assistance Unit; Paralegal Specialist Lynette Briggs; Joshua Ellen, of the Litigation Technology Unit, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Deborah Sines, who worked on earlier stages of the investigation. Finally, they praised the work of Assistant U.S. Attorneys Michael Truscott and Reagan Taylor, who prosecuted the case.